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SUBJECT

Basic Differences Between Djilas and Tito

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The Milovan Djilas affair is symptomatic of the changing mood in the European Leftist circles in favor of Moscow. The official Yugoslav broadcasts only brush the surface of this conflict. Djilas' criticism of the bad manners of his Party comrades and of their attitude towards non Party women are quite unimportant incidents used to cover up the real issues. The demotion of Djilas is a consequence of the growing strength of a more orthodox school of thought among the Yugoslav Communists, who are returning now in some respects to tenets which, after their 1948 desertion from the Kremlin, they had believed to be antiquated. Contrary to some newspaper reports, this does not indicate however, a desire to rejoin the Cominform organization. The major points in the conflict are the following:

1. Milovan Djilas is the leader of a group of younger Communists who were sent abroad by their government, and while living in Western countries, were able to compare the Western standards of living with those in their own country, as well as in the USSR and in Eastern Europe during the period of 1945 to 1948. This group was inclined to interpret the break between the Belgrade Communists and Moscow as the beginning of a general breakdown of the Soviet Communist Party State, either in the process of violent internal convulsions or as the result of a war between the Western and the Soviet camps. In the view of this group, Communism, and not only Stalinist Communism, had come to the end of its historical road after its victory over the Nazis, and a general transformation of all the Communist states along Western democratic lines appeared to them therefore on the order of the day. Djilas, in particular, was the

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25X1

-2-

proponent of a theory which held Soviet Communism to be identical with state capitalism, a thesis abundantly discussed in Trotskyite circles for more than twenty years. This thesis leads easily to identifying the Soviet system with the capitalist economy, showing a balance in favor of capitalist economy which produced more material goods and better forms of democratic organization than the state capitalistic Soviet economy. From this theoretical starting point, the one-party system in Yugoslavia appeared as outmoded. The conclusion was that it has to be supplanted by a multi-party system to be gradually introduced by permitting other Socialist parties also to organize their machines and to participate as separate units in elections and in the administration.

2. The introduction of a multi-party system, even if extended only to Socialist organizations at the beginning, would have to end in the readmission of non-Socialist, "bourgeois" parties also especially those working along nationalist lines in multi-national Yugoslavia. The Djilas group, however, is confident that the majority of the Yugoslavs would vote in one form or another for the Communist Party or other Socialist parties, and that it would be possible to keep the present government in power even while granting more rights to its opponents. Djilas worked out his ideas over a long period, hesitantly moving from one phase of his theory to another under the impact of the unrest inside Yugoslavia and the discontent of several party groups with the privileges which the Partisan generation was enjoying through holding of key political and economic posts under the undisputed authority of Marshal Tito.
3. The fact that Tito is one of the last Communist rulers to combine military, political, and Party command in one person, gives Yugoslavia a highly centralized form of government, despite the easing of controls in the local apparatuses. Tito's autocratic rule comes into constant conflict not only with the vocabulary of democracy but also with the concept of decentralization loudly voiced in the Yugoslav Party language during the past few years. It also creates constant difficulties for the bureaucracy which has to interpret correctly and carry out efficiently this curious type of "decentralization". This has led to a state of affairs where, despite the improvement in living standards (and in the general intellectual atmosphere of the country) there is stagnation in important sectors of the economy. The introduction of the highly complicated Workers' Councils in the factories is leading in many instances to both administrative confusion and increased discontent among the workers. Surplus goods are being divided among the workers of the factories, but this is being done to the detriment of investment and industrial expansion, and the elected directors of the plants do not dare to defend the general interest against the workers claims with sufficient energy. The situation in the countryside has more or less reverted to that existing prior to the abortive collectivization of the early post-World War II years, but this state of affairs has also led to discontent in the Party cadres in the villages, and the permanent difficulties between the countryside and the cities.

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-2-

-3-

4. Appointments and promotions of the Party organizers are made almost exclusively from the point of view of loyalty to Tito and not sufficiently from the point of view of efficiency. The Djilas group has therefore sponsored its multi-party democracy in the hope of breaking up this ring and opening the doors to new people, although Djilas is insecure about what economic policies such a new group would adopt.
5. There also are certain personal elements in the conflict which cannot be altogether disregarded, because Djilas more or less considers himself as Marshal Tito's successor, a claim of some importance in view of Tito's rather shaky health. The strong rejection which the Djilas group met with on the part of Tito and the Party organization can be interpreted, however, not only as self-defense of the political group in power, but as the expression of a basically different interpretation of the present evolution in Yugoslavia.
6. The views of the Titoists may be summed up as follows:
 - a. In domestic affairs the Titoists are not inclined to relax the existing economic controls in favor of a free enterprise economy. They are proud of their original collective economic organization (competition between government and locally-owned enterprises, workers' councils; competition among peasants' cooperatives, etc.), and believe that they have found new forms of competition which are stimulating production and influencing parallel developments in east Europe and perhaps even the reforms which are being carried out under Malenkov and Khrushchev. Where Djilas and his friends mostly see failure, incompetence, and inefficiency, the Titoists are inclined to blame these shortcomings on the transitional character of their measures. Djilas' criticism of domestic matters therefore appears as an unpardonable sin, the misunderstanding of the various phases through which the Yugoslav Communist economy must pass. After the Djilas incident, the vocabulary of the Party may become more democratic and anticentralistic than before, but economic policy will move in the direction of tightened controls for fear of a growing Djilas-type opposition.
 - b. Foreign policy: The basic difference between Tito and Djilas however, lies in the area of foreign policy. An old discussion among the various anti-Stalinist oppositions is being now rehashed in modern forms (without the Titoists being aware of repeating variations on an old theme). The subject under debate is whether the Moscow dictatorship can be transformed gradually by a series of internal reforms, or has to be destroyed by an insurrection. Anti-Soviet feelings in Yugoslavia are still strong, but are nevertheless on the decline. The Belgrade Government feels now that it need not fear a Satellite attack inspired by the Kremlin; it considers the Yugoslav state sufficiently stable to be rated as a permanent factor by the Moscow Government. Malenkov's gestures toward better diplomatic relations with the Yugoslav Government are viewed as tantamount to the Kremlin's recognition of Yugoslavia as an independent state. Tito certainly does not want to sacrifice the possibility of maneuvering between the East and the West, and to go back to Moscow as a Satellite. But an improvement in the Moscow-Belgrade relations is nevertheless considered

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25X1

-4-

by him as highly desirable. The Titoists certainly belong to that school of anti-Stalinist oppositionists who would consider an insurrectionist movement against the Kremlin as most undesirable, because the overthrow of the Communist regime in the Kremlin would lead to the destruction of the Communist movements in Europe, and engulf the present Yugoslav regime as well. Thus, despite the differences between Moscow and Belgrade on matters of domestic Communist policy, the existence of a Communist Government in the Kremlin is considered as necessary for the maintenance of the Tito regime.

7. For this reason, the Tito school favors the theory that the black features of the Stalin regime can be abolished step by step through a number of internal reforms. Furthermore, the Tito government is impressed by the steady growth of the world Communist movement. When the Yugoslav Communists broke away in 1948, they were not too well-informed about the Communist movements outside east Europe, and were inclined to consider Communism in Europe on the decline. Since then, the victory of the Chinese Communists has deeply impressed them, and, like most of their comrades in other countries, they see a distinct difference between the Mao and the Stalin regimes. To keep themselves somewhere between the Moscow and Peking Governments is therefore the course which the Titoists are not likely to abandon, because only in that middle position can they hope to rearrange their own relations to the Asian Communist Parties. Djilas' proposals, in their opinion, would cut them off definitely from the expanding Communist movements in Asia, and to a certain degree also in Europe.
8. The Tito Communists tend to view the Social Democratic Parties as organizations of the past, and do not think that they have much chance to improve their international situation by closer contacts with these Socialist groups. The British Labor Party especially the Bevanite Left-wing, belongs however in another category as far as Yugoslavia is concerned; but it is highly improbable that any closer relationship should exist between Djilas, (as has been reported,) because Bevan's and Tito's general evaluation of the present trend in the Socialist movements is much more alike anti-centralistic.
9. A parallel development has taken place among the Trotskyites, (the Fourth International,) and although this organization has no political importance, the discussion among its branches bears certain resemblances to the divergencies between Djilas and Tito. Since last fall, a debate has been raging between a group of French Trotskyites called "the Pabloites" and the American Trotskyite organization under James Cannon. Pablo, the leader of the Pabloites and secretary of the so-called Fourth International, is a Greek Communist who has lived for many years in Paris. He has organized a faction advocating the conditional return of the Trotskyites to the Communist Parties of western Europe. His policies have been summed up by himself as follows:

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-5-

- a. Stalinism is a definite phase of Communism which has been nearing its end since the middle forties.
- b. The Soviet Communist bureaucracy, under pressure of the Russian working class, will purge itself of its Stalinist heritage through a number of internal convulsions. The Pabloites' practical policy corresponds to this interpretation, while the Cannonites, on the contrary, are sticking to what they consider a basic Trotskyite tenet, namely, that the Stalinist regime cannot be modified by internal reforms, but must be overthrown by an insurrectionist movement following more or less the east Berlin pattern of 17 Jun 53. The "correct theoretical evaluation of the Mao regime" plays as great a role in this feud as in that between Tito and Djilas.
10. It is characteristic that the majority of the American Trotskyite Communists are sticking to the doctrine of insurrection in the Soviet Union, while a considerable portion of the French Trotskyites and of their British counterparts have accepted Pabloism. This has led to a split in all the related Trotskyite organizations. The discussion in these small groups has however a bearing on similar trends in all the Socialist Parties.

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